

Message Text

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42

ACTION OPIC-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 L-03 COME-00 TRSE-00 IGA-01 /038 W

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R 191500Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6706

INFO AMEMBASSY MASERU

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GABORONE 0814

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, BC

SUBJECT: SUA PAN SODA ASH PROJECT

REF: STATE 140648

DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS OPIC

1. CHARGE' DISCUSSED SUBSTANCE REFTEL WITH COMMISSIONER OF MINES MINNES AND ECONOMIC CONSULTANT TO MINISTER OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND WATER AFFAIRS TOUGH, BOTH OF WHOM MAY ACCOMPANY PERM SEC GAOLATHE ON UPCOMING TRIP TO U.S. AND EUROPE. THEY GAVE ASSURANCES THAT GOVERNMENT IS READY TO NEGOTIATE IN REALISTIC TERMS AND IS WILLING TO DISCUSS A NUMBER OF OPTIONS WITH GULF ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FULF AND GOB.

2. GROUP PLANS TO ARRIVE WASHINGTON ABOUT JULY 6 AND HAS ASKED BOTSWANA EMBASSY WASHINGTON TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENTS WITH OPIC (HENDERSON) JULY 7 OR 8. THEY HAD HOPED TO MEET WITH GULF OFFICIALS IN HOUSTON JULY 10, THEN GO TO SALT LAKE OVER 11-13 WEEKEND TO VISIT INSTALLATIONS. THEY HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH GULF AND THIS SCHEDULE MAY HAVE TO BE REARRANGED DUE TO GULF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS AND OTHER COMPLICATIONS. THEY THEN PLAN TO FLY TO NEW YORK FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH BANKS INCLUDING CHASE. THEY WOULD DEPART U.S. ABOUT JULY 20 FOR LONDON AND DISCUSSIONS IN EUROPE. DEPENDING ON GULF'S AVAILABILITY, THEY

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MAY REVERSE SECOND TWO WEEKS, VISITING NEW YORK AFTER THEIR

WASHINGTON CALLS AND SEEING GULF AFTER THE 13TH.

3. MINNES AND TOUGH FEEL THAT GOB WILL HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN ARRANGING INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING. THEY WILL BE TALKING TO IFC IN THIS REGARD. THEY WERE BOTH UNAWARE AND WERE VERY INTERESTED TO LEARN THAT OPIC IS CAPABLE OF ASSISTING IN PUTTING TOGETHER FINANCING PACKAGES AND MAY WISH DISCUSS THIS ASPECT WITH OPIC.

4. FYI: GENERAL IMPRESSION GAINED DURING COURSE OF CONVERSATION WAS THAT GOB DEFINITELY INTERESTED IN GULF PARTICIPATION IN SUA PAN PROJECT AND MAY GIVE SOME DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY TO VISITING TEAM FOR NEGOTIATIONS. GULF SHOULD BE PREPARED TO ENTER INTO SPECIFIC AND DIRECT DISCUSSIONS ON MAJOR ASPECTS OF POSSIBLE AGREEMENT. END FYI.

THOMSEN

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